These include liberalizing the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme for tour operators promoting India, organizing Road Shows in important tourist generating markets overseas, arranging familiarisation tours to India for international travel trade and media representatives to keep them updated on safety / security conditions in the country, media campaigns in the print and electronic media and a "Visit India 2009" scheme, in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel to India during the period April to December 2009.

The expenditure involved is incurred by the Ministry from funds allocated for Overseas Promotion and Publicity, amounting to Rs. 220 crore, during the current financial year.

Development of Tourism Industry

831. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is seriously thinking to develop tourism as a throbbing industry; and

(b) if so, what are the plans or programmes undertaken to attract tourists from all over the world?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to States/Union Territories on the basis of project proposals received from them subject to availability of funds and *inter-se priority* under the following schemes:

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits.
2. Assistance for Large Revenue Generating Projects.
3. Computerisation and Information Technology
4. Fairs, Festivals and Events.
5. Rural Tourism-Infrastructure and Capacity Building for Service Providers.

The Ministry of Tourism is also implementing the schemes of human resource development, market research, domestic and overseas promotion and publicity for this purpose. India Tourism Offices abroad also undertake promotional activities in important overseas markets for promoting India as an attractive destination. Assistance is also provided to tour operators / travel agents for sales-cum-study tours, participation in fairs and festivals in overseas markets and for production of publicity materials.

Shortage of hotel rooms for Commonwealth Games

832. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the shortage of hotel rooms is a major deterrent in promoting tourism;